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SUBJECT: THE AMBASSADOR'S IFTAAR DINNER

¶1. (U) In celebration of Ramadan, the Ambassador hosted an Iftaar dinner on October 11 for members of the Islamic Community as part of a recent series of events involving Bosnia's religious communities. Dinner guests included many of Bosnia and Herzegovina's leading Muslim clerics and academics, including Reisu-l-Ulema Mustafa effendi Ceric, who opened the event with a traditional blessing. The Ambassador opened the conversation with a discussion of the cultural and religious aspects of Bosnian Ramadan. As the evening progressed, guests drew on the combined knowledge of Bosnia's top Islamic religious, community and academic leaders for a lively discussion on Bosnia's religious and cultural heritage, as well as a comparison between Christian and Muslim faiths.

¶2. (U) The Ambassador encouraged his guests to continue their work on interreligious dialogue within the community, and cited a recent event at his residence where the highest ranking Bosnian Catholic, Orthodox, Muslim and Jewish religious leaders met to discuss the role of religion in Bosnia's recent national elections. Responding to the Ambassador's encouragement, Reis Ceric agreed to host a religious roundtable in the near future. On November 9, the Ambassador will again host religious leaders for a discussion with Dr. John Voll, professor of Islamic history and associate director of the Prince Alwaleed bin Talal Center for Muslim-Christian Understanding at Georgetown University.

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